

Bray, Rodney

From: Bray, Rodney
Sent: Friday, 21 November 2014 3:19 PM
To: Nafisi, Nivad
Cc: Morton, Phillip; Neathercote, Mark
Subject: FW: Expression of Interest Turner School Fencing program
Attachments: Expression of Interest Turner School containment fence.pdf

Nivad,
For your records.

Rod

From: Padgham, Jo [<mailto:Jo.Padgham@ed.act.edu.au>]
Sent: Friday, 21 November 2014 3:17 PM
To: Bray, Rodney; Morton, Phillip
Subject: Expression of Interest Turner School Fencing program

Dear Rodney and Phill,
Please find attached the Expression of Interest from Turner School for the next school fencing project.
We look forward to working with the ICW team.

Warm regards and thank you for all your work with our school.
Jo

Jo Padgham

Jo Padgham | Principal

☎: +61 6205 6622 | 📠: +61 2 6205 6616 | ✉: jo.padgham@ed.act.edu.au

Turner School | Condamine Street | Turner ACT 2612 |




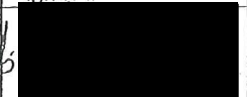

EXPRESSION OF INTEREST: INSTALLATION OF A SECURITY FENCE

School Name: Turner School

Please describe the reason you do/do not support the installation of a security fence at your school:

* Please see
attached.

Please describe other security issues (if any):

We, the undersigned, do/do not support the installation of a security fence.			
Principal	Name	Signature	Date
	Johanne Padgugan		21 Nov. 2014.
Board Chair	Name	Signature	Date
	Robert Edwards		21 Nov 2014.
President of Parents and Citizens Association	Name	Signature	Date
	Helen Bell		21 Nov 2014.

Attachment

Expression of Interest: Installation of a Containment Fence on part of the Turner School Playground

Reasons to support the installation of containment fencing on part of the playground:

Turner School is an inclusive school that is both mainstream and specialist. Currently children in K-6 with identified disabilities that have challenges relating to staying within an uncontained area of the school are required to play in one of three fenced areas: the very small junior (K-2) enclosed play space, the very small senior (3-6) enclosed play space and the Trainyard (K-2) play space. The school and P&C has developed a beautiful, imaginative and accessible play area in an unfenced area of the school and many children with disabilities cannot access these spaces during the lunch and recess play periods and before school. There are also WHS issues for staff who at times need to hold a child's arm to transition them through our school. Injuries to staff have occurred.

The installation of a containment fence along the Hartley St boundary, along with the existing buildings acting as barriers would provide a large containment area that encompasses the new creative play spaces, the bike track, the outdoor stage, the garden and environment centre and the roster house. All children playing in this space would have access to toilets, the library and a great deal of shade. All children (mainstream and special education) would have access to social play. Drop off in the morning for parents of children with disabilities would be improved as they would not need to be dropped off in the junior enclosed as they are now and children and parents could more easily mix. It will also enable more independent access between buildings for many children with disabilities as they will not require arm/hand holding which is not age appropriate.

The school would like to be consulted on the design aspects of the fence and gates. As this is not a request for a regular security fence, the school would like this containment fence to be 1.8metre high with flat top or rounded pole tops (not arrow point). Access into and out of the contained area are a priority. We would like the design to incorporate two double vehicle gate entrances at the ends of the area and two pedestrian gate entrances. The community would like the pedestrian gates to be unlocked after hours for community access to continue the garden maintenance, care of the chickens and roosters and play on the equipment, paths and cubbies areas.

There is a small internal area that links the proposed area to the centre staff carpark and oval. This would require a containment solution that suits the needs of the community. This would not need to be the same as the Hartley St fence solution. The school would like to liaise with the landscape architect on options for this area as aesthetics and internal access by students of different ages between areas of the school have emerged as important, along with the needs for inclusion and safety of all our children.

We believe the installation of a containment fence will support us to better meet the Disability Standards in relation to "the provision (to students) of opportunities and choices which are comparable to those offered to students without a disability."

Phill Morton and Fiona Kidman from ICW are familiar with the areas for the proposed containment areas.



Turner School

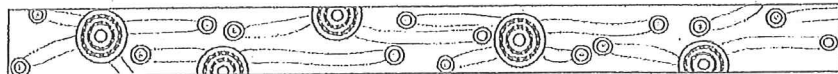


P&C General Meeting
Wednesday, 19th November, 2014
7.30pm Turner School Library
Agenda

- Welcome
- Apologies
- Acceptance of minutes of previous meeting
- Business arising from minutes of previous meeting
- Reports
- President's report
- Treasurer's report
- Principal's report
- General Business
 - Bunnings sausage sizzle – Saturday, 6th December
 - Christmas concert BBQ – Wednesday, 3rd December
 - 2015 Welcome Morning Tea
 - Fete wrap-up
 - Fence proposal discussion
 - Fairy garden arches
 - 2015 AGM date
- Other business
- Next meeting
- Meeting close – approx. 9.30pm

www.turners.act.edu.au p: 02 62056622

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President's report

Thank you to everyone who took the time to come to the community meeting last Wednesday to discuss the proposal to seek funding for school fencing. Thanks also to everyone who took the time to share their concerns about the proposal and the process. In my first letter at the start of the year, I made it clear that as everyone is a member of the P&C, regardless of their ability to attend the meetings, we have a responsibility to work to ensure we continue to represent the views of this broad group. To this end, I sent an email to those on the P&C distribution list yesterday morning to gauge opinions on the fence, to which more than 50 people took the time to contribute.

Summary

I've heard and appreciated your suggestions, concerns and opinions over the last three weeks and considered them in my position as your representative. There is agreement that everyone benefits from Turner being inclusive. Providing additional areas for special needs children to play was also well supported. Given our limited funds (and fund raising record) asking to be included in the Directorate's fencing program seems to be the only real option to provide additional play spaces for our special needs children. The quick poll we undertook in the lead up to this P&C meeting provided me with a strong indication of the level of support for a 1.8 metre fence along Hartley Street. I recommend we ask to be part of the fencing program for the Hartley Street fence. As there are mixed views on the internal fencing and there may be viable alternatives, I propose we leave the internal fencing out of the security fencing program and work together to identify the specific problem we're trying to address, and the most suitable option for a solution. There was little support for fencing the bike area and viable alternatives have been raised as part of the consultation. I recommend we remove this section of fencing from the proposal.

The details

The proposal to fence part of Hartley Street has been discussed over the last few weeks. I feel that there is an opportunity to improve our approach to consultation and engagement in the future, which I will speak about shortly. First, I'd like to share my thoughts on the proposal.

The proposal offered a solution to two problems of which many people had not been aware: the need to expand the play area for special needs children and the huge OH&S impost the current school practices are having on Turner staff members.

In the rationale for the fence proposal Jo outlined the need for a fence to reduce the risk of injury to staff. While OH&S is an important area, the P&C is not in a position to evaluate the need for this intervention, or to discuss the best options for policies and procedures to reduce OH&S injuries. This is a matter for the school and the Board. I am happy to defer to their judgement on this area.

The remaining problem we are trying to address is the extension of play spaces for children with special needs. As an inclusive school, it is important that we facilitate interaction between all children and provide pleasant, interesting, play environments. While the number of children an expansion of the play areas would benefit changes each year (with the varying needs of the children, who each have individual development plans), there are approximately 20 children currently at Turner who would be the immediate beneficiaries of an extended play space. All children would benefit from playing together, although it has also been made clear that fencing would create an impost on main stream children and reduce their ability to learn responsibility. It would also come at the expense of losing the open boundary that so many people have cited as central to the character of Turner School and its place within the community.

Through the consultation process there were three alternatives raised:

1. Accepting an offer from the Directorate for a 1.8m containment fence, aligned with the Directorate's Security Fencing Program (fully funded by the Directorate)
2. Upgrading the existing enclosed playgrounds to make them interesting play spaces (funded by the school)

3. Building a containment/playground fence of a lower height (1.2m or 1.4m) that would be more visually appealing, building a fence out of different material, such as the tennis style fence around the Catholic Primary in Page) or digging into the Hartley Street hill, creating a wall as a barrier, rather than fencing (funded by the school)

While in theory all three are options, in reality we are constrained by funding. This year the P&C set out to complete the cubbies project to make it wheel chair accessible, which we achieved. This project, combined with supporting children in the Pegasus Riding Program and the representative teams (Chess & Tournament of the Minds) exhausted our budget.

We had also prioritised a musical playground, which would have helped to make the existing enclosed spaces more interesting, however due to the above commitments we weren't able to fund this project in 2014.

I am not confident there is a commitment within the school community to band together to raise money to build a more visually appealing fence than the one we are being offered.

I accept the school would benefit from having an additional inclusive play area. While a vote is only one of many avenues for feedback, the quick poll in the lead up to tonight showed there is general support for a 1.8 metre fence along Hartley Street. I propose we write to the Directorate to request being included in their security fencing program for a fence along Hartley Street. Following this, we will work with a fence designer to establish the colour (there have been several people asking for green), the number and location of gates, the latch design, a policy on the opening and closing of gates and when, if ever, the gates would be locked. The need to ensure parents continue to be able to drop children off easily along Hartley Street needs to be taken into account.

There is little support for a fencing the bike rack area and this should be excluded from the proposal.

In the quick poll undertaken in the lead up to tonight, there was little support (and much disagreement) with the use of security fencing for our internal fencing. It seems that people would rather a much shorter fence (1.2m), or an alternative to fencing.

We need to do some more work here on whether this internal fence is the best option. This includes a discussion of the problem/s, suggestions for possible solutions (or the development of a process that would lead to the generation of solutions) and an evaluation of the advantages and disadvantages of each option. As I understand it (based on a discussion with the representatives from the Directorate at the community meeting) the funding for a Hartley Street fence is not conditional upon the inclusion of a 1.8m internal fence. We are able to consider alternatives for this area without forgoing inclusion in the program for the bulk of the fencing; it's just that the Directorate won't fund any alternatives. I propose we leave the internal fencing out of the security fencing program and work together on alternatives.

There will be a short period set aside during the meeting to discuss the fencing proposal.

I'd like to leave time within the meeting to discuss the process, with the aim of improving our future consultations. To be effective, consultation needs to give people the opportunity to discuss the problem, examine the evidence and work together on options for solutions. Our school has a huge opportunity to benefit from the considered input of our parents and community. Decisions that will change the fabric of our school will be better as a result of well-run consultation.

There needs to be a clear distinction between the views of the P&C (by that I mean all parents and the community), those of teachers, students and the Board. In considering the fencing proposal these lines were blurred. While we value the opinion of all groups, as the P&C, we need to be able to consider them separately.

Our 72 teachers were included in the initial survey sent out to the parents and community, with the results inseparable. The proposal had already been adopted by the Board at the October meeting (as was the consultation process). At the community meeting, which was held to hear from the community, there was a perception that

people were not free to present their views. Many at the meeting left with a sense that if you were against a fence you were to be branded as being against inclusion at Turner, which is simply not true.

The initial consultation period was too short, with the process rushed to meet a deadline imposed by the Directorate. While we worked to successfully extend this deadline, there was still only a short period to have an informed discussion on the issues. In future, if there is a deadline that means adequate consultation cannot be undertaken, I propose the P&C adopts a position of maintaining the status quo.

The approach that was taken by the school left it open to criticism of advocating for a specific solution, rather than consulting on a problem. This came across in feedback on the interaction between teachers and students in the class discussions, as well as in the absence of alternatives in the fencing proposal put to the community. I tried to balance this at the community meeting and I am doing so again now.

I understand that the next big proposal will be the car parking. Let's look to this as a way of improving our consultation.

I am conscious that this is a long President's report and I appreciate you taking the time to read it before Wednesday night's meeting.

I'd like to thank Bob and Jo for the time they have put into the fencing proposal. I'd also like to thank Phillip and Fiona from the Directorate for working with us towards a solution. Finally, I'd like to thank you, for working as part of the P&C to make Turner an even better school for our children.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Bell